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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRASILIA 000097

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR REVIEWS BILATERAL ISSUES WITH BRAZILIAN
U/S EVERTON VARGAS

REF: A. BRASILIA 0084

[1](#)B. BRASILIA 0085

Classified By: AMBASSADOR CLIFFORD M. SOBEL, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. The Ambassador, joined by PolCouns (notetaker), met with Ministry for External Relations (MRE) Under Secretary for Political Affairs Everton Vargas on January 11 to raise Kosovo independence (ref A) and possible Brazilian participation in UNAMID (ref B). Vargas was joined by chief of staff Antonio Salgado, North America desk director Joao Tabajara, and an officer from the International Organizations division. During the meeting, Vargas and the Ambassador also discussed the proposed defense cooperation agreement (septel), the FDR Award, the move of two key MRE officials to Geneva, climate change negotiations, biofuels cooperation, pending agreements on diplomatic property and counternarcotics cooperation, U.S. visas for Brazilian participants in MINUSTAH, and upcoming high-level visits. In a brief one-on-one discussion, Vargas informed the Ambassador that the GOB would be consulting with India on a strategy for approaching the USG jointly regarding UN Security Council Reform. End summary.

FDR Award

[1](#)2. (U) Vargas began by commending the Ambassador for the FDR Award recently given to three Brazilians--one of whom was Vargas' son, a diplomat trainee at the MRE's Rio Branco Institute--for papers written on the United States. (Note: Vargas' son was selected by a panel of experts who read each paper without knowing who the author was. End note.) Commenting on the large number of Brazilianists in the United States, Vargas lamented that lack of Americanists in Brazil, adding that the MRE program on the United States is weak. He said he has been thinking of sponsoring a meeting of U.S. and Brazilian academics to promote exchange on the two countries.

Key MRE Officials Moving Out

[1](#)3. (SBU) In response to the Ambassador's question, Vargas confirmed that U/S for Economic Affairs Roberto Azevedo and FM Amorim's Chief of Staff (and Azevedo's wife) Maria Nazareth Azevedo would both be heading to Geneva soon, the former as Brazil's ambassador before the WTO, the latter as ambassador to the UN in Geneva. Vargas went on to say that these moves reflect a broader philosophy of FM Amorim to move younger diplomats into key positions. At a meeting in of

Brazil's ambassadors held the previous week in Brasilia, Amorim had explained to them the importance of "renovating" Itamaraty's presence through the appointment of this younger generation of diplomats.

Climate Change

14. (C) The Ambassador asked if Vargas was indeed going to the Major Economies Meeting in Hawaii at the end of January. Vargas confirmed he would be going, along with Climate Change Envoy Amb. Sergio Serra, Ministry of Environment Secretary for Climate Change and Environmental Quality Thelma Krug, Ministry of Science and Technology's General Coordinator for Global Climate Change Jose Domingos Gonzalez Miguez, and the new chief of the MRE Division for Environmental Policy and Sustainable Development Andre Odenbreit Carvalho. He stressed that stories in the press suggesting he might not go were untrue; he had never considered not going. (Note: MRE subsequently told ESTH Counselor that the delegation will not/not require Portuguese interpretation. End note.)

15. (C) Vargas described the USG participation in Bali as "very constructive" despite the U.S. negotiators' "tough instructions." He said the Indians brought similarly tough issues to the table in the G-77 discussions. But he feels there is no other alternative to these all-party talks, and noted that MRE Director of the Department of the Environment Luiz Alberto Figueredo Machado will chair the next segment of the negotiations under the Convention. He concluded that, while the MEM process cannot replace the Convention, this kind of additional dialogue is useful.

Biofuels

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16. (SBU) The Ambassador asked about progress on our biofuels cooperation. Vargas confirmed that he hoped he and U/S Jeffery could hold a Steering Committee meeting on February 29 in Washington (rather than March 7 as proposed by US). This timing would ensure a report could be made to the Secretary and FM Amorim when they meet. The Ambassador asked

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about the naming of Brazilian private sector members to the advisory group. Vargas said it had been done already. When the Ambassador noted that, as of January 9, at least one proposed Brazilian member was still not sure if they would be invited, Vargas gave instructions to his staff to find out where the invitations stood. Vargas added that the MRE has proposed a March 3 meeting between Vargas and U/S Dobriansky on the U.S.-Brazil Common Agenda.

17. (SBU) The Ambassador asked about the long-pending reciprocal visit of U.S. scientists to Brazil. Vargas agreed it needs to happen quickly, and asked Salgado to make sure they propose a date, preferably one before March. He said he would like to co-host with the Embassy a meeting of the U.S. and Brazilian scientists at Itamaraty to discuss next steps following their visit. To the Ambassador's suggestion that the Ministry of Science and Technology might be prepared to take the lead on this initiative, Vargas said that only the MRE is in a disinterested position that allows it to convene all of the various GOB entities involved.

18. (SBU) The Ambassador raised the importance of looking toward the next group of countries in which to undertake biofuels cooperation under the MOU. Vargas said he was concerned about announcing engagement of new countries without first have clear results from our initial collaboration. He said he has asked for an assessment of concrete results our work has had. He added that he did not want to rush into new countries, but only select them after careful prior consultation. The Ambassador suggested that,

nonetheless, the next Steering Committee meeting would be an opportunity to share information on which countries each side saw as potential candidates.

Pending Agreements

¶9. (U) The Ambassador raised the pending Letter of Agreement on counternarcotics cooperation. Vargas said he was following it closely and that it had just gone to the legal office that day (note: lower levels in Itamaraty had led us to believe it was already in the legal office before the Christmas holidays. End note.) Vargas raised the property agreement, confirming that it was in the president's office and that he had asked them to rush their analysis so it could go the President for signature. He said that MRE had already drafted a reply diplomatic note, and would send it as soon as the decree was published.

MINUSTAH Visas

¶10. (SBU) Vargas raised with the Ambassador the MRE's concern that an expedited process in Port-au-Prince for MINUSTAH forces to obtain visas had been ended, making it impossible for them to take R and R in the United States. The Ambassador promised to look into it. (Note: Post has since looked into the issue with Embassy Port-au-Prince and is looking for ways to accommodate Brazilian participants prior to departure from Brazil. End note.)

Upcoming Visits

¶11. (C) Vargas asked if dates had been set for a visit by the Secretary to Brazil. The Ambassador said he understood that

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March 14 and 15 were being discussed in Washington, as part of a larger trip to the region. Vargas said that, if the two stops planned were still Brasilia and Salvador, it would be best to do Brasilia first, as he does not believe President Lula ever receives foreign visitors on Saturday. Vargas proposed a February 11 for a visit by U/S Burns, saying that he felt it important for the two to meet prior to the Secretary's visit. He said that, if the February 11 did not

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work, he was free the rest of that week, as well.

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UN Security Council Reform

¶12. (C) In a one-on-one sidebar after the meeting, Vargas told the Ambassador that Brazil was working with India on a strategy for engaging the United States on the issue of UN Security Council reform.

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